

NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
POLITICAL FEATURE NO. 1-0820
HARRY HEINTZEN

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SOUTH AFRICA BLACKS AND FREE ENTERPRISE

ANNCR:

IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE NATION'S LEADING INDUSTRIALIST, HARRY OPPENHEIMER, HAS APPEALED FOR WHOLESALE CHANGES IN THE FIELD OF RACE RELATIONS. VOA'S HARRY HEINTZEN HAS THE DETAILS.

VOICE:

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF THE GIANT ANGLO-AMERICAN CORPORATION AND AN OUTSPOKEN CRITIC OF THE NATION'S RACIAL POLICIES, MISTER OPPENHEIMER HAS OFTEN INCLUDED COMMENTS ON THE NATION'S PREVAILING SOCIO-POLITICAL CLIMATE IN HIS COMPANY'S ANNUAL STATEMENT. IT WAS THIS STATEMENT THAT WAS CARRIED PROMINENTLY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MEDIA. IT TOOK UP A FULL PAGE IN MOST OF THE NATION'S MAJOR NEWSPAPERS AND WAS A LEAD ITEM ON THE NATIONAL NEWS NETWORK.

A FORMER MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT, MISTER OPPENHEIMER'S POINT IS THAT THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR ADAPTATION AND CHANGE ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN THE WHOLE FIELD OF RACE RELATIONS. IN ESSENCE, HE SAYS THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM OFFERS ALL PEOPLES OF SOUTH AFRICA THE BEST HOPE FOR PROSPERITY AND FREEDOM AND THAT BLACKS MUST BE MADE A PART OF THE SYSTEM ON AN EQUAL FOOTING AS WHITES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

AT PRESENT, MISTER OPPENHEIMER SAID, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE WHITES AND A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE BLACKS FAVOR THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM. BUT HE SAID THAT MANY BLACKS ARE

DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND SHARE EQUITABLY IN THE BENEFITS THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES HAS PRODUCED.

DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION AND EXCESSIVE BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL, MISTER OPPENHEIMER NOTED, IMPINGE ON IMPORTANT AREAS OF THE DAILY LIVES OF THE BLACK POPULATION PREVENTING THEM FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND THE REWARDS OF ABILITY AND HARD WORK. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, LIVING CONDITIONS, SECURITY AND TRANSPORT FACILITIES ARE ALL MARKEDLY INFERIOR TO THOSE AVAILABLE TO WHITES. "THE FACT IS," IN HIS WORDS, "THE BLACKS ARE NOT TRULY PART OF OUR FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AT ALL." AND HE ADDED: FOR THOSE OF US WHO BELIEVE AS I DO THAT THIS SYSTEM OFFERS FAR GREATER POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPING THE WEALTH OF SOUTH AFRICA AND FAR GREATER SCOPE, FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL THAN ANY OTHER, THE SITUATION IS ALARMING."

MISTER OPPENHEIMER SAID SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD STRIVE IN EVERY WAY TO ENABLE WHAT HE CALLED ITS "NON-SHARING, NON-PARTICIPATING (BLACK) MAJORITY" TO SHARE IN THE OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DECISION-MAKING-OF THE NATIONS FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM."

THERE IS CLEAR AND UNMISTAKABLE EVIDENCE, HE ADDED, THAT A MAJOR MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION WOULD BE FOR SOUTH AFRICA OF VERY CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE ABROAD. WITHOUT IT, IN HIS WORDS, "OUR GOVERNMENT'S EXTERNAL POLICY OF CONCILIATION AND DETENTE CAN SCARCELY HOPE TO SUCCEED."

THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRIALIST SAID IT WOULD BE FOOLISH TO PRETEND THAT IT WILL NOT BE ENORMOUSLY DIFFICULT TO EVOLVE MEANS WHEREBY THE BLACK PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA CAN PARTICIPATE IN DECISION MAKING AT ALL LEVELS AND SHARE EQUITABLY IN THE OPPORTUNITIES AND WEALTH OF THAT COUNTRY. HE CALLED FOR UNORTHODOX AND IMAGINATIVE APPROACHES TO SPEED UP BLACK PARTICIPATION AND SAID THAT IF THE EFFORT IS GENUINE AND DETERMINED THEN VERY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS CAN BE MADE IN A MUCH SHORTER TIME THAN AT FIRST SEEMED LIKELY.

JS/PBM